

VCE year 11 history essay

Outcome 2:

“All quiet on the western front”

Write a 1000 word essay, addressing the following question:

“To what extent does the film “All quiet on the western front” accurately represent the realities of war in World War 1?”

Use evidence from both the film and other sources in your answer.

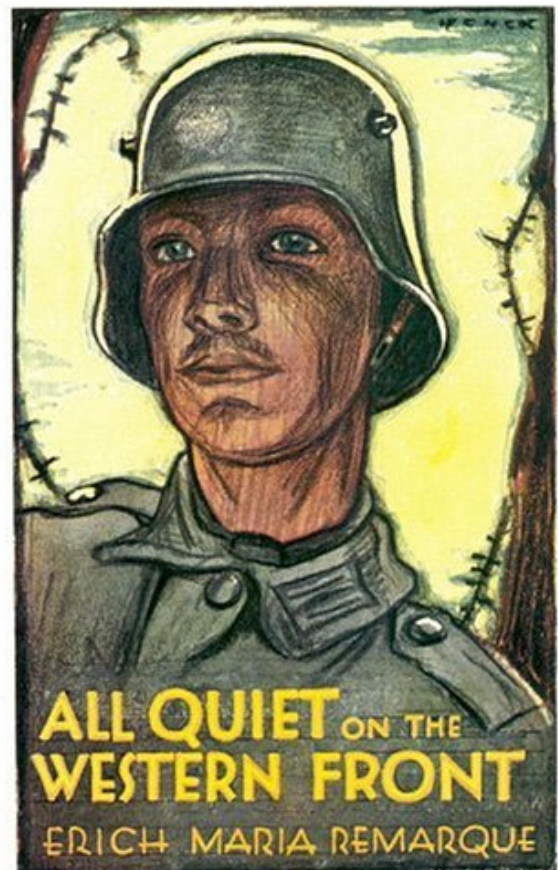
You could consider such elements as:

- The relationships between men
- The nature of the medical services
- The trenches
- Attitudes to war
- Fighting on the front line

The above is merely a guide and should not be considered the only issues worthy of discussion.

Word length: 1000 words.

Due date:



Watching the movie

Below are some guiding questions which should help you form ideas about the movie and the topic. Use your own words and personal ideas to answer these questions while watching the movie

1. How were the causes of World War One dealt with in this movie?
2. How were the German soldiers represented?
3. How were the Allies represented?
4. Do the soldiers understand why they were fighting?
5. What attitudes towards the authorities are expressed?
6. How much violence is shown, and what response would this evoke?
7. Is a moral position taken in the film? Does the film place guilt in any direction? What position does the film take on war.
8. Do you think attitudes to war have changed, and the way it is presented?

History essay writing

We set essays because we want to help you improve your writing skills and your ability to think creatively, systematically and analytically. This is a skill which you will use in Year 12, if you are attending university and you will use it in your future professional life.

In an essay you are expected to present a well-constructed and clearly expressed argument based on evidence.

Writing essays can be challenging. (The word “essay,” when used as a verb, means to try or to attempt.)

Producing a good essay requires considerable effort and careful organisation of time and ideas. Inspiration is only a small part of the process, so essays written the night before they are due may be spontaneous, but are unlikely to be thoughtful or thought - provoking.

A good history essay enables you to effectively communicate your ideas to your teacher. However, there are certain processes and procedures to follow.

A history essay must have a clear introduction, a number of paragraphs and a conclusion.

Introduction

An introduction is at the beginning of an essay. As the name suggests, it provides the student with an opportunity to introduce the question/statement at hand. That is, state your contention and then provide brief/concise points (no examples in your introduction). In other words, you are informing the reader that you have understood the essay question and that you will provide reasons/substantiate your contention. You should also define any ambiguous words in your introduction (this is done after your contention)

Structure

- Opening sentence that addresses the question (contention).
- Define any ambiguous words/terms in the statement or question.
- Briefly outline 3-4 points that you will expand on and discuss in your paragraphs.
- Tying off sentence that reiterates your contention, your opinion.

Paragraphs

Each paragraph requires you to elaborate on the idea that you briefly outlined in your introduction. As a general rule, one paragraph equates to one topic idea. Each paragraph begins with a topic sentence. It is in the paragraphs that you present supporting evidence/quotes/facts etc to strengthen your argument. Each paragraph should be approximately 12 lines in length.

Structure of paragraphs

- Topic sentence
- Explain/discuss topic sentence
- Use examples (from both the movie and historical facts)
- Linking sentence back to contention

Conclusion

A conclusion allows you to sum up what you have written in your paragraphs. You do this by reiterating the points in your essay but it is not an opportunity to introduce new points or ideas. This should have been done in your paragraphs. In a sense, a conclusion is your last chance to try and convince the reader that what you have been arguing is true or false.

Structure of conclusion

Reiterate your contention – be affirmative

Present your points of discussion by way of re-affirmation (but rephrase where possible)

Tying off sentence

Remember, history essays are based on fact, not fiction, and supported with evidence through examples from the movie and from historical fact.

Do not use metaphors or attempt to be creative. It is not an English essay.

Planning an essay

It is not easy to write an essay off the top of your head, particularly within time constraints. My advice is to spend some time planning what you intend to write. Your plan can be done in point form and shouldn't be any longer than 50 words. A plan gives you a focus when you are writing your essay and also allows you to jot down some quotes or facts which you may otherwise forget. If you run out of time, the teacher may also refer back to your plan and you can pick up some valuable marks.

Sentence structure

If you are unsure about where to use certain types of punctuation, always resort to using short, concise sentences. You will not be penalised for doing so. In fact, it often works to your advantage.

Spelling

If you are unsure about how to spell a word, look it up in the dictionary or on your computer. There is no excuse for misspelling a word that is in the essay question or your textbook! I will assume that is just being lazy.

Punctuation

If you do not know where and how to use certain types of punctuation, don't use it! This can be avoided by using short sentences. If you are unclear, ask your teacher.

Abbreviating words

Don't assume you can abbreviate words at your leisure. You must write out the full word first then put the abbreviation in brackets. Once you have done this you may use the abbreviation.

Eg. World War one (ww1)

Also, avoid writing etc, ie. And so on. You must write 'for example', 'that is'.....

Use of facts/quotes/statistics

Without supporting examples/facts/quotes/statistics, your essay lacks substance. You must incorporate these into your essay to demonstrate to the reader that you can back-up your opinion with evidence.

Grammar

Never use 'i, we, us, you' in an essay. You are writing in the third person. This means that you present information based on historical evidence. You are in Year 11 now, so confusing words like their/they're/there and it's and its is not acceptable.

Command terms

Command terms are words used in statements, questions and quizzes. They direct you to the way in which a question should be answered. It is important that you are aware of the meaning of these words as they are used in all year levels in the Humanities department.

Humanities LA 2009 - Command Terms and Definitions	
Account for	Give reasons for why something exists or occurs
Analyse	Show the essence of something by breaking it down and examining each part critically. Clarify any relationship between each part.
Assess	Make a judgment about the value, quality, outcomes or results of an argument.
Compare / contrast	Describe the similarities / differences between two or more things.
Define	Give a clear and precise meaning of a given word, term or concept. (using examples here often helps even if not specifically asked for)
Describe	Present the characteristics of a particular topic. Give a detailed account (often emphasising the most important features). PQE can be used in this instance.
Discuss	Offer a considered and balanced review of a particular topic. Opinions or conclusions should be presented clearly and supported by evidence and argument. Use arguments, debate, give reasons for and against, consider the implications
Explain	Give reasons why a situation exists or process occurs.
Examine	Consider an argument or concept in a way that uncovers the assumptions and interrelationships of the issue.
Evaluate	Make an appraisal by weighing up strengths and limitations.
Identify	Recognise and state briefly a distinguishing fact or feature.
Justify	Give reasons for your choice or decision.
Outline	Give the main features or general principles of a topic, omitting minor details and emphasising structure and connections
To what extent	Evaluate the success or otherwise of an argument or concept. Opinions and conclusions should be presented clearly and supported with empirical evidence and sound argument.

Helpful ways to begin an essay

It is true to suggest.....
Historical evidence supports.....
It is debatable as to whether.....
There are a number of reasons why this statement is true/false.

Helpful ways to begin a conclusion

It has been shown that.....
There is no doubt.....
It is without a shadow of a doubt.....
Strong evidence supports the theory.....

Assessment criteria

It is very important that you carefully read the assessment criteria so that you know what is expected of you.

	Max. Points	Exceptional	Accomplished	Approaching Proficiency	Unsatisfactory
Introduction	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong, well developed contention statement, related to essay question (succinct & focused) Takes a clear position Interesting, relevant arguments and observations. Appropriate & informative background information and historical facts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear contention statement, related to essay question Takes a position Interesting and invites the reader to continue Provides some historical context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unclear or poorly developed contention, unrelated to essay question Weak, vague position Weak, irrelevant arguments or opinions Little background information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No contention No position No argument or opinion No background information
Body	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topic sentences directly support contention Reasons are insightful, logical & strongly back up the topic sentence and contention Examples and quotes support the contention with substantial, relevant information from a variety of sources Thorough and insightful analysis and response to the essay question No content errors Overall, very thoughtfully written & persuasive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasons generally back up the topic sentence and contention Examples & quotes support contention with some relevant information from a few sources Clear discussion of the evidence (though more descriptive than analytical) and its relation to the contention Insignificant content errors Thoughtful & persuasive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topic sentences are vague Vague or few supporting reasons Examples & quotes are vague with minimum use Contains minimal or limited discussion of evidence and its relation to contention General or superficial response to the essay question Several content errors Somewhat thoughtful & persuasive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contention missing so support irrelevant Shows little or no understanding of the essay question No examples & quotes No evidence or evidence and commentary do not relate to the contention, essay question, or documents Major content errors Unpersuasive
Conclusion	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contention and main points restated and rephrased. Explains significance of topic; leaves reader with insights gained Brings closure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main points <i>or</i> contention restated Vague explanation of importance of topic Brings closure with some insight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loosely related to essay question Doesn't point out the importance of the contention and evidence presented Does not bring closure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No conclusion Unrelated to contention Unrelated to essay question
Writing Conventions	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free from grammatical and spelling errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few grammatical and spelling errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammar/spelling errors evident, but do not interfere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequent grammatical /spelling

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sources properly cited Mature, varied sentence structure Creative, artful flow and appropriate use of language Interesting, provocative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor errors in source citations Smooth and logical flow Appropriate use of language Substantive and consistent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> with argument presented Distracting errors in source citations; few sources Some use of informal language Some lapses in flow Irrelevant or confusing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mistakes that interfere with understanding No citations No logical flow or organization No title
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Essay Writing, Student Checklist

The following is a suggested method to assist students in constructing a history essay.

Write the Question: _____

Deconstruct the Question

- What are the key words in the question?
- Can you develop an argument/view point?

Introduction

- What is your introduction?
- What is your answer to the question?
- What is your argument?
- What are the points you are going to write about?
- What is your overall statement?

Body Paragraphs

- What is your topic sentence in each paragraph?
- What is your distinct focus in each paragraph?
- What evidence have you provided?
- What linking words have you used to add new ideas or compare and contrast ideas/arguments?
- What is your concluding sentence in each paragraph to draw back to the question?

Conclusion

- What main points have you restated?
- What new material have you included? There should be none.
- What is the concluding sentence that answers the question?

Finally, be your own editor:

- Reread your essay carefully.
- Scrap unnecessary words.
- Keep your sentences short and clear.
- Check, your punctuation?
- Avoid preventable mistakes. (especially their/there/they're and it's its)

Due date: Tuesday 17th of March

10% off for each day late